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ABSTRACT

Systematic observations and ratings by self and others were part of an ethnographic approach to studying the self-concept of 48 severely to mildly mentally retarded adults in a sheltered workshop setting. Ss completed both the Self-Esteem Inventory for Adults and "The Way I Feel About Myself" Self-Concept Scale. Rehabilitation counselors completed behavior rating forms, and Ss were observed during work performance and social interactions. Factor analysis and ethnographic observations identified four groups: elite (who have positive self-concept and maintenance of self-esteem through social conformity); socialites (who frequently use self-aggrandizement to present a highly positive self, which is unstable and vulnerable); loners (who have accurate and balanced self-concept sustained through self-esteem maintenance strategies based largely on independent judgment); and nonconformers (who are unhappy and lonely, with negative self-concepts and ineffective esteem-building strategies). However, self-report and staff ratings were only weakly related to observed behavior. Results further revealed that the domains represented in self-report and staff rating measures did not reflect Ss' major concerns. (CL)

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The Meaning of Self-Concept in a Sheltered Workshop Population

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Over the past 20 years there have been many efforts to assess the self-concepts of retarded persons. Most often, such research has attempted to measure the effects of special class placement, institutionalization, and new programs such as mainstreaming on self-concept and self-esteem (Balla & Zigler, 1979; Cornman & Gottlieb, 1978; MacMillan, 1977). In general, researchers have used available self-report scales, and have obtained conflicting results.

Among other reasons for the unsatisfactory state of self-concept research with retarded persons may be more general problems with self-concept measurement itself. Among the criticisms of self-concept methods are the following: the vague and incomplete state of self-concept theory; reliance on conventional assumptions about personal attributes and roles; item selection which reflects thinking and biases of researchers but pays little attention to natural cognitions and concerns of persons; no opportunity for individuals to offer their own self-perceptions or to indicate the saliency of the descriptions they are to choose among; the reliance on self-report measures with all the problems of influential response determinants, such as social desirability responding; lack of information on what reference group the individual uses to anchor his/her self-descriptions; and individual variation in weighting quantitative scale points (Beane & Lipka, 1980; Calhoun & Morse, 1977; Germaine, 1978; Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976; Wylie, 1974).

All of these problems are compounded in assessment of mentally retarded persons (Sch rr, Joiner, & Towne, 1970). Their sheltered lives, the disproportionate amount of failure experience, and the social stigma of being labeled retarded, all may affect development of self-perceptions, as well as affect the ways in which they may react to conventional approaches.

Questions yet unanswered by previous research with retarded persons include: Can retarded individuals be expected to accurately report how they feel or act?

Is there confusion between how they really are and how they have been told they should be? Are they more susceptible to social desirability responding? What is the meaning of self-concept in retarded groups? Finally, what are the prospects of using conventional self-concept measures with such populations?

Ethnographic perspectives

One way to clarify the meaning of self-concept among retarded persons is qualitative or ethnographic perspectives. The advantages of ethnography for this task are several: ethnographers seek to portray people and settings in detail, allowing for heterogeneity; the subjects of research themselves are given a chance to influence the categories of observation (what the anthropologists call emic or folk categories); and finally, the global, holistic conclusions of ethnography can often be useful for planning for analytic, targeted investigations, for example, the search for a better understanding of self-concept among retarded individuals and how it might be assessed.

In Turner's (in press) ethnography of a sheltered workshop, several of his conclusions are relevant to the issues raised here. First, he observed large discrepancies between self-report and actual behavior, raising doubts about the utility of traditional self-concept measures. For example, during weekly group counseling sessions it was not uncommon for some persons to say they have no friends and are lonely and unhappy. Yet on any given day, they may have been observed just prior to the counseling session happily interacting and socializing with a group of peers. The reverse was also true: persons claiming many friends were observed to be "loners" and unsuccessful at making and maintaining friendships.

Second, he observed a self-presentation strategy among some retarded persons which may affect accuracy of self-report. Specifically, some individuals fabricate and elaborate events which they believe make them appear to have more normal, eventful, and interesting lives. These normalcy fabrications are often in evidence

after blows to self-esteem (e.g. someone on a bus calls the individual a "stupid retard"). Such strategies might in turn, be expected to increase social desirability responding on self-report measures.

Perhaps more fundamental are the questions Turner raised about the aspects of life which are most salient to the retarded persons he observed, and thus the dimensions of self-perception which might be most critical for assessment. One such question relates to the importance of work and work success in the lives of individuals in a sheltered workshop. The workshop is ostensibly a place of preparation for competitive employment; most of the staff attention is addressed to work, work training, work attitudes, etc. In contrast, Turner observed that in general, the retarded clients of the workshop rarely spoke of work during the weekly counseling seessions he had conducted for six years; less than ten of 500 dream reports involved work or work aspirations; but the clients did highly value the social and socializing experiences the workshop affords in an otherwise limited life style (mostly watching TV at home). In particular, the workshop is a place where there is a chance to find a girlfriend or boyfriend, whereas outside the workshop such opportunities are extremely limited for most of the clients.

These observations raised questions for us about the relevance of work and work-related issues as well as the role sociality plays in conceptualizing self-concept for this population. They helped form the focus of our study: what is the meaning of self-concept in a sheltered workshop for the retarded?

Our approach was multi-method, both quantitative and qualitative. We employed ethnography, systematic observation, self-report, semi-projective, and others' ratings. Our aim was to understand the issues and range of phenomena that should be considered in looking at self-concept in this population.

Method

Sample

The sample consisted of 48 mentally retarded adults ranging in age from 23 to 50 years. Of the 48, half were diagnosed as Down's Syndrome, and the other half had unspecified brain damage. Twenty five were considered mildly retarded, 16 were moderately retarded and seven were severely retarded. The mean IQ for the group was 50.82 (s.d. = 9.95). There were 28 males and 20 females. All subjects were caucasian with the exception of one male who was of Mexican descent.

All subjects came from relatively sheltered life situations. The majority, 39, lived at home with their parents or other family members. Seven lived in board and care facilities, and two were married and lived with their spouses in their own homes. All were employed in a sheltered workshop; none had ever worked competitively for any length of time. Prior to their workshop experience, 35 had attended special education classes or special schools and 13 had no formal schooling at all. Five of the 48 spent some time in an institution or residential hopsital for the mentally retarded.

Three sources of quantitative data, ratings by subjects and staff members, and systematic observations, were collected. The subjects completed two standard self-report measures, the Self-Esteem Inventory for Adults (Coopersmith, 1967) and "The Way I Feel About Myself" Self-Concept Scale (revised for adults, Piers-Harris, 1969). Both measures were administered orally and subjects only had to indicate whether the self-descriptive statements were like them or not. In addition, eleven Sentence Completion Stems adapted from the Shorr Imagery Test (Shorr, 1974) were also administered. The sentence completion method is a semi-structured projective technique in which it is assumed the subject reflects his own wishes, desires, fears, or attitudes in the sentence he makes. The content of his responses, the material which the subject selects to complete the sentence stems, reveals

characteristic self-preoccupations. These 11 stems (e.g. I am, I can, I feel, I will) were specifically chosen because they are relatively unstructured to permit the greatest possible latitude for self-expression. Each subject was seen individually for a total of 3 or 4 thirty minute sessions, spanning a period of two weeks. Two to four examiners administered the measures per subject.

Four vocational rehabiliation counselors on staff at the workshop filled out the Behavior Rating Form (Coopersmith, 1967) on those subjects they were most familiar with. Ratings were made on 10 items which assessed their perception of the subjects' sense of worth.

Systematic observations were made on each of the subjects to examine their work performance and their social interactions and affect during both work and break periods. These observations were conducted by four trained observers, who prior to beginning, viewed video tapes of subjects' work and break-time behavior until inter-rater agreement reached 92 per cent across all behaviors. Random checks on inter-rater agreement were made each week throughout the 8 weeks of observations never revealing agreement of less than 80 per cent. The observations included four five-minute work-time coding periods: when subjects first arrived, during morning work period, during afternoon work period, before quitting time; and three five-minute breaktime coding periods: morning break, afternoon break, lunchtime. During each five minute period, a total of 10 observations were made consisting of 15 seconds of behavior observation followed by 15 seconds of recording time. Each subject X time was randomly assigned to one of four observers over the eight week period.

Finally, participant observation had been conducted over a period of six years by Turner and his associates to try and understand the experiential world of retarded adults in a workshop setting. During this time they immersed themselves in the lives of the clients by interacting, listening, and watching

what these individuals were concerned about and how they acted on those concerns. They also conducted weekly group sessions with small numbers of individuals to discuss their current problems or whatever topic they wished to introduce. The ethnographic data were tape recorded when possible and/or written in notebooks to document as accurately as possible what was seen and heard.

Results

Computing Pearson Product Moment correlations among all the variables which produced a 19x19 matrix which includes observation variables, self-report total scores, staff ratings on self-concept, and age and IQ (see Table 1). Initial examination

- Insert Table 1 about here -

of the matrix indicated that the observation variables sorted into two patterns, workshop behavior and yard behavior, which appeared to be essentially unrelated.

To reduce the matrix, a principal components factor analysis was applied to the observation variables;communialities were estimated from the squared multiple correlation of each variable with all other variables in the matrix. Factor extraction was accomplished by means of the maximum likelihood method. A varimax solution was used with factor rotation limited to those with eigenvalues greater than 1.000 resulting in the identification of four factors. In addition, two and three factor solutions were examined with the two-factor solution offering the most coherent result.

The two factor solution confirmed the initial interpretation of the correlation matrix that the behavior of the clients divided along the workshop and yard settings (see Table 2). Factor I defines a dimension of sociality distinguishing

- Insert Table 2 about here -

(1) persons who socialize in the yard (those who sit or stand around with friends,

interact with peers during break and lunch periods, and to a lesser extent while working and generally appear to be content); from (2) those who do not socialize (those who wander about alone, monitor goings on, display neutral affect both in the yard and during work periods, and tend to talk to self rather than peers in both settings).

Factor II defines a dimension of work behavior distinguishing (1) those who work in the shop (those who are on task, exhibit neutral expressions, do not interact with peers while working, and show some tendency to talk to self while in the yard) from (2) those who do not work (those who are generally off or between task, are often content, interact with peers during work periods and tend to dance during lunchtime). Based on the factor loadings, subjects were identified as having positive or negative scores on each of the two factors and then assigned to one of four groups: high workers-high socializers or "workshop elite", high workers - low socializers or "loners", low workers-high socializers or "socialites", or low workers-low socializers or "nonconformers".

Ethnographic Observations

To enrich our descriptions of the four groups defined by the factor analysis, the extensive files of ethnographic data were used (see Table 3). Composite portraits of the groups are presented below:

Elite: Members of the "Elite" are generally acknowledged as being the best workers in the workshop and are typically assigned to the most demanding, desirable and best paying jobs. Many have achieved the status of lead worker, acting as assistants to the supervisory staff. As a group, they are more consistently on-task and productive than any of the other segments of workshop society. Further, they rarely complain about the work they are assigned, their supervisor, or any other aspect of their daily work life. They constitute the most compliant and task oriented of the four groups.

Their exemplary self-control and industriousness, however, appears to be a result of over-socialization, with their opinions, attitudes, values and beliefs almost identical to their parents. Significant others (usually parents) are invoked as rightful arbiters over all aspects of their lives. Most do seem genuinely content with this state of affairs, feel they have a good life, and accept their dependency with grace and good humor.

Members of the elite are highly popular with workshop peers and enjoy rich affiliative relationships in workshop society. The majority maintain stable long term boyfriend/girlfriend relationships with fellow clients and nearly all have positive and enduring friendships with peers of both sexes. Their everyday relations with peers, workshop staff, and parents are rarely problematic. None of the individuals in this group has ever been suspended from the workshop as a disciplinary action, or for inappropriate behavior. They are the "model citizens" of workshop society. They conform both to the external authority structure which governs their lives and comportment etiquette of peer subculture.

Nearly all are actively involved in organized recreational programs for mentally retarded adults (e.g. bowling leagues, dances, social clubs, etc.) and their leisure time outside the workshop is rich and fulfilling. At work, at home, and at play, they are constantly in the pressure of benevolent authority. They feel that it is a good life and have no plans or desires for change. They feel good about themselves, their lives are eventful and all important socio-emotional needs are being met. Their self-esteem maintenance is based largely on the fulfillment of duty as they see it.

Socialites: Although many are considered by the staff to be capable of good work, their work attitudes and habits are highly variable depending on the nature of work assigned, the quality of their relationships with particular supervisors, and whether or not they are involved in their own or someone else's personal problems. Few socialites ever achieve lead worker status and in most

cases their tenure in this position is temporary and short-term. Individuals in this group tend to be preoccupied with sociemotional concerns and are inconsistent in their work behavior and their commitment to a work ethic. They are generally more talkative than members of the other groups, are prone to dominate conversations with peers and to focus conversation mainly on themselves. Although actively involved in the problems and concerns of peers, their style is not that of a sympathetic listener but rather one of assertive advice giving and problem solving.

While they are generally popular amongst workshop peers, functioning as self-appointed peer counselors, joke tellers, ranconteurs, and gossip-mongers, their relationships with peers are characteristically more transient than those of the Elite group. Nearly all members of this group maintain a steady boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, although relatively few sustain any particular relationship for more than a few months. When their romances falter, they quickly find someone new. There is also a high turnover rate in the people they nominate as their "best friend." They drift in and out of relationships, solving problems, telling their jokes, and stories, and then moving on to a new friend, a new audience.

Socialites report a relatively high frequency of personal problems in their everyday lives. Some of the factors contributing to this include: (1) their tendency to get involved in other peoples' problems which then becomes "their" problem; (2) the centrality of their position in the gossip/rumor network which generates its own unique set of problems; and (3) their proclivity for fabrication. Socialites often embellish, exaggerate, and invent personal problems in an apparent attempt to combat boredom and to make their lives more exciting. Although they are often involved in minor disciplinary problems they seldom have a history of chronic behavior disorder.

Socialites are more resistant to parental and staff authority than the other groups and are much more ambivalent regarding their dependency on others. Conflict with parents and staff often involve minor restrictions on personal freedom and independence which breach their public facade of claims and aspirations to independence.

Since within workshop society, it is permissable for an individual to claim any role or identity they desire without fear of being discredited or challenged by peers, members of the socialite group tend to engage in extensive self-aggrandizement and public misrepresentation of their experience, personal qualities, and accomplishments. They can thus be generally characterized as making liberal use of wish-engendered fantasy as a means of regulating self-esteem. Their self-concept is ill-defined, unstable, inaccurate and vulnerable and their fabrications represent a complex and varied form of strategic self-presentation designed to defend their highly fragile self-image.

Loners: Loners are generally described by staff as "good workers" and in most respects their work attitudes and behavior are comparable to the elite. Several have been lead workers and those who have not typically aspire to that position.

Loners are the least talkative and sociable members of workshop society. Their low rate of peer-interaction, however, seems to be clearly a matter of personal style and preference rather than social rejection. They are not social isolates, nor are they lacking in the necessary verbal skills, they simply seem to prefer less interaction. Peers typically describe loners as "nice" and instances of peer conflict involving individual members of this group are rare. Loners are often seen at the fringes of interaction--observing but not participating. They are quiet, passive, and introverted, although their "co-presence level" is high. Very few members of this group have maintained a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship that has lasted more than a year. They do, however, tend to have

stable, enduring relationships with "best friends" of the same sex.

This dispassionate quality in the everyday demeanor of loners also distinguishes them from the other groups in terms of emotionality and affect. While most individuals in the workshop are open and demonstrative in their communication of private feeling states through posture, gesture, and facial display, as well as verbally, loners are notably less likely to display their feelings through expressive mannerisms or to spontaneously comment on their personal well being. They are more stolid individuals whose typical facial expression is impassive and non-revealing of their private thoughts and feelings. They consistently report that they have few personal problems either at home or in the workshop, and most appear genuinely poised, serene, and at peace with themselves and others.

Many loners have special abilities or interests which serve as a means of self-expression and play an important role in their self-esteem maintenance. These special talents include: playing musical instruments, building models, sports (both as fans and active participants), woodworking and carpentry, knitting, and dates (i.e. one loner is a calendar calculator savant).

Compared to the other groups, loners maintain a more balanced and accurate self-appraisal and seem considerably more secure in both their ability and right to construct an independent judgement of their self-worth as individuals.

Nonconformers: Members of this group are generally the least reliable and most unproductive workers in the client population. Very rarely is a nonconformer designated by staff as a lead worker although many claim to be lead workers when they are not. Their work behavior is often problematic for staff as they are typically not merely off-task, but wandering around, leaving their work station, talking loudly and disrupting other workers. As a result, they are much more likely to be embroiled in conflict with workshop supervisors than

members of the other groups.

The overwhelming majority of individuals in this group have consistently reported over a period of several years that they are lonely, unhappy, and that their lives are fraught with personal problems. Few nonconformers maintain long term boyfriend/girlfriend relationships with workshop peers and most such relationships are unstable with numerous breakups and reconciliations. In terms of peer relations, they are the least popular of all the groups. Many have the reputation of being "troublemakers" or "babies" and the frequency and intensity of conflict with peers is much higher than in the other three groups.

The disdain other clients have for nonconformers appears due to their lack of self-control. While there is a high tolerance level for affective expression and public display of emotion within the workshop society in general, nonconformers abuse the norms. It is not only that they sulk, cry, malinger, and throw temper tantrums more frequently than others, but that they are seen by peers as strategically faking feelings and emotional displays "just to get attention."

Problem reporting is not just restricted to difficulties encountered in the workshop setting. Individuals in this group frequently report problems involving parents and caretakers. Typically these problems, which they perseverate on for weeks and months at a time, involve what the individual perceives as inappropriate and unnecessary regulation of their personal life (e.g. use of telephone, TV, or record player, being told when to bathe and go to bed, not being allowed to have friends over or to visit at their home, etc.).

Members of this group can be characterized as having more restrictive life experiences than the other groups. Their lives outside the workshop tend to be uneventful and lacking in social stimulation. They participate in fewer organized recreational programs and have less opportunity for peer contact outside

the workshop setting. When not at work they spend most of their time watching television. Their boredom has become such a pervasive, noxious presence in their emotional sensibility that they are desperate for eventfulness and flounder about the workshop breaking rules and attracting negative attention from both peers and staff. Compared to other groups, non-conformers are lonely, anxious people who fret, complain, and worry, and are clearly dissatisfied with their lives.

Self-Report Measures and Staff Ratings of Self-Concept

The quantitative and qualitative observations suggest there are four groups of workshop persons, distinguished by their observed behavior, who differ substantially in terms of self-concept and self-esteem maintenance tactics. To summarize they are as follows:

1. Elites: positive self-concept and maintenance of self-esteem through social conformity;

2. Socialites: frequent use of self-aggrandizement to present a highly positive self, which is unstable and vulnerable;

3. Loners: balanced and accurate self-concept, sustained through self-esteem maintenance strategies based largely on independent judgment;

4. Nonconformers: unhappy, lonely persons, with negative self-concepts, and ineffective esteem-building strategies.

Yet comparisons among the groups on the Piers-Harris and Coopersmith measures (self-report) of self-concept indicate no statistically reliable differences (see Table 4). There were also no differences on staff ratings of self-concept. One-way analysis of variance of each score, across the four groups, yielded not a single significant F for either total or subscale scores.

The means in Table 4 do indicate that the loner group had slightly lower scores on the self-report total scores, and on the staff ratings. While not significant in the four group statistical comparisons, this trend is reflected in the correlation matrix (see Table 1).

Staff ratings are correlated with two of the quantitative observation variables. These are: Wandering Alone in Yard (.-54) and Sitting/Standing with Friends in Yard (.37). The former is inflated and somewhat misleading: the two most socially isolated individuals who habitually wander alone were given ratings by the staff that were more than two standard deviations below the group mean.

With these two individuals removed, the correlation between staff ratings and Wandering Alone drops to -.27; thus it is more prudent to conclude that staff ratings weakly relate to social behavior in the yard of a fairly narrow range, i.e., proximity to peers in an unstructured social situation. There were no relationships between staff ratings and workshop behavior, which is a more structured, task-oriented situation.

The only instance of congruence between self-report and observed behavior was the positive correlation of the Coopersmith Total score with Total Peer Interaction in the Yard (r = .3x1). There were no correlations between self-reports and workshop behavior, or between self-reports and staff ratings. The two self-report measures do relate (r = .68) indicating consistency across task in self-report, however.

In sum, self-report and staff ratings are only weakly related to observed behavior; they discriminate only in the yard, not the shop; and there is no pattern of relationship between staff perception and self-report with respect to observed behavior.

A simple item analysis indicates the basic reason the self-report measures discriminate so weakly and in so limited a fashion. Of the 105 items which make

up the Coopersmith and Piers-Harris scales, 56 were endorsed in the positive direction by 80 per cent or more of our informants. Several items showed no variances, and many were endorsed (always in the positive direction) by 95 per cent or more. None of the 49 items, which were endorsed by less than 80 per cent, discriminated among the four groups detected by quantitative and qualitative observation, a conclusion based on one-way analysis of variance of each item, comparing the four groups (elites, socialites, loners, and nonconformers).

The distribution and range of staff ratings are more satisfactory (Mean = 34, range = 19-42 and standard deviation = 4.49). However, the skewed distribution of the self-report measures, due to the evident lack of item discrimination, would substantially affect the possibility of a self-report/staff-rating.

Analyzing Domains of Self-Concept

Possibly, the self-concept measures fail to discriminate very well due to overly restricted or inappropriate definition of self-concept, and in turn a limited item pool. Our ethnographic data and the Self-Concept measure suggested domains which were not obviously represented in the self-report and rating measures; an observation which led us to examine the question more systematically. We used an incomplete sentences procedure in anticipation that the semi-projective of the task would permit our informants to provide, in a standardized task, the domains of self-description. To anticipate our findings, it appears in general that our 48 informants employ a number of dimensions of self-description which are either not represented in any way or represented numerically on either the self-report or the staff rating measures.

Analysis of response to 11 stems we used, indicated that in general, most of the 48 subjects' responses appeared to be reflecting their prosocial aspirations, namely their strong desire to adhere to social norms in both their home and work lives. More specifically, seven categories of response were identified: references

to activities or possessions, social conformity and dependency comments, work-related comments, heterosexual comments, personal attributes, and references to family and friends (see Table 5).

The two most interesting categories to emerge were social conformity and dependency, accounting for 28 percent of the total responses. Conformity comments including, "I will do things like you want me to", "I should learn to take teasing", "I can't talk to strangers", "I won't say no dirty words", "I won't talk back to my mom and dad", seem to be echos of rule statements which the other-regulators in the lives of these individuals must have often repeated. They've become so ingrained in their thoughts, that given a chance to define themselves they feature these rules rather than personal qualities, appearance, and social status, which accounts for only 12 per cent of these responses. Implicit in these compliant responses is the individual's acceptance of the active and extensive role others seem to play in regulating their lives, a conclusion which anticipates the appearance of the dependency dimension in their responses.

Many of the informants willingly admit their personal limitations and in doing so seem to be accepting their dependent roles and the need for assistance by others. For example: "I can't help myself", "I can't do a lot of things I'd like to do", "I wish I could do things like other people", "I need help most of the time". Dependency and social conformity are functionally linked variables and thus it is not surprising that given the one being present in the ISB self-referents, the other is also present. Dependent persons must typically be socially conforming as a condition of their dependency; otherwise, powerful other-regulators and providers can withhold needed and valued resources and privileges, contingent upon conformity.

Twenty three percent of all the responses referred to activities or possessions seen as highly desirable and future goals likely to be achieved. References to the acquisition of consumer goods such as a color TV, bicycle, radio and

participation in activities including things to do (e.g. I will ride a bike, I will paint, I want to play ball) or places to go (e.g. I want to go to the movies, I want to go to a baseball game) seem to be a reaction to the boredom these individuals experience. For them, their lack of friends and social relationships outside the workshop represent an undesirable state resulting in the need to increase eventfulness in their lives. An interesting point is that many of the desires they express such as I want to go to Disneyland, I want to go back to London, can only become a reality if another person intervenes. Thus once again the role of dependency prevails.

Work and work-related issues make up 13 percent of the responses. Such comments referred to their contentment with work and their ability to work well (e.g. I want to work, I am good at my job, I will do a good job) or indicated a desire for more work, different work, the need for help with their work or acknowledgement that they should do better work.

The frequency of their heterosexual comments, 11 percent, attests to the importance relationships with members of the opposite sex has for this population. This attitude or social awareness is evident in comments indicating their hopes for love, marriage, the desire to date more, and references to hugging, kissing, and sex.

Finally, a small number of references, 8 percent, were made to family and friends. Family comments were generally in terms of affection for various family members (e.g. I secretly buyed my mom a gift, I wish my daddy would come back) or assistance given family members (e.g. I will help my niece and nephew wash up, I should cook for my mom). Comments about friends referred to the desire for friendship relationships (e.g. I need a companion, I should make friends) or the need to socialize more (e.g. I should be with my friends more, I should play with the kids).

Although there were no statistically significant differences among the four groups on the ISBs, there are some obvious consistencies between the categories employed by the informants and the ethnographic observations. For example, the importance in both of heterosexual relationships; possessions and activities, which relates to the need for many individuals to secure and sustain "eventfulness" in their lives, which are otherwise routine, stereotyped, and boring; the substantial role playing in their self-conceptions, and feelings of esteem, by the evaluations, and approbation of significant others in their lives.

Discussion

The two most frequent means of measuring self-concept are self-report and others' ratings, techniques insensitive to important differences among our informants. In fact, if scores from these measures are viewed in isolation from ethnographic data, the result is an over-identification of subjects having positive self-concepts.

Part of the problem in using self-report measures with this population is their tendency to endorse socially appropriate behaviors. From responses to the ISB, it is evident that our subjects are very aware of the kinds of behavior expected of them. Even those individuals whose observed behavior did not conform to expected behavior patterns in the workshop, responded in a socially desirable way. For example, almost all subjects reported their behavior to be conforming on the Piers-Harris subscale Behavior, which consists of items representing obedience or compliance (e.g. I am well behaved at work), and on the subscale Popularity, which includes items describing one's sociality (e.g. I have many friends). Such reporting is especially striking in those subjects who spent most of their time between or off task and those who socialized little during lunch or breaktime.

What we have then for at least some of the informants is a lack of congruence between observed behavior and self-reports. However, it may be misleading to

interpret as merely a methodological artifact--social desirability response set, a warning explicit in Crowne and Marlowe's (1964) classic analysis of social desirability (SD) responding. They concluded, based on an impressive array of experiments and observations, that SD responders were individuals evaluatively dependent on significant others. We think the concept of evaluative dependence is useful in interpreting our findings.

Crowne and Marlowe regarded evaluative dependence as a personality trait; we think it may be more usefully considered in our workshop sample as a state rather than a trait, to use the common distinction in personality research (Magnusson & Endler, 1977). Our sheltered workshop sample are generally dependent on parents and staff; and in particular they are dependent on the evaluations of others, for access to peers, possessions, activities, almost anything they want or need.

This state of evaluative dependency presents formidable barriers to use of self-report as a method of self-concept assessment, a view sustained by our data; which show disproportionate numbers of endorsement of positive traits; and a lack of congruence between self-report and observed behavior. However, our ethnographic observations suggest there are circumstances in which individuals are more candid and accurate reporters of personal conceptions; when situations are more informal, devoid of evaluative overtones, and include the presence of supportive, noncritical others.

Our results also indicate that the domains represented in the self-report and staff rating measures do not reflect major concerns of these individuals. Perhaps if these measures included those behaviors and domains most salient to the population under examination, variations in self-concept would more likely be detected. At the workshop, our multi-method approach revealed that salient domains to the self-identities of the clients include: work, social conformity, and dependency, and eventfulness/boredom as well as interpersonal relations

including family, peer and heterosexual partnerships. These domains are either not presented in current instruments or not represented.

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Table 1

Correlations Between Observation Variables, Self Concept Scores, Age and IQ

	On task	Peer inter-w	Self-verb-w	Cont. off-w	Neut-off-w	Bored-oft-w	Sit/stand-y	Wander-ing-y	Monitor-ing-y	Dancing-y	Peer-inter-y	Self-verb-y	Cont. oft.-y	Neut. off-y	AGE	IQ	PH total	C total	Staff rating-SC
[illegible]	-																		
[illegible] - work	-.43	-																	
[illegible] - work	.04	-.18	-																
[illegible] - work	-.31	.62	-.16	-															
[illegible] - work	.30	-.54	.16	-.71	-														
[illegible] - work	-.50	-.05	-.09	-.25	.07	-													
[illegible] - yard	.11	.10	-.22	.13	-.08	-.24	-												
[illegible] - yard	.10	.22	.34	-.18	.24	-.07	-.64	-											
[illegible] - yard	.19	-.15	.04	-.19	.34	-.22	-.22	.38	-										
[illegible] - yard	.08	.29	-.07	.19	-.21	-.06	.04	-.09	-.15	-									
[illegible] - yard	-.09	.49	-.20	.20	-.31	-.02	.48	-.38	-.51	.20	-								
[illegible] - yard	.07	-.34	.52	-.14	-.17	-.14	-.11	.32	.18	-.07	-.37	-							
[illegible] - yard	-.10	.29	-.13	.27	-.23	-.08	.33	-.18	-.29	.05	.42	-.08							
[illegible] - yard	.16	-.18	.16	-.09	.16	-.09	-.29	.26	.41	-.06	0.36	.06	-.75	-					
[illegible]	.10	.08	-.14	-.05	.20	-.11	.07	.08	.31	.14	-.03	-.09	.12	.10	-				
[illegible]	-.05	.10	.03	.16	-.13	-.06	-.12	.07	-.11	.16	-.08	-.22	-.01	-.04	-.13				
[illegible] Harris - total score	.26	-.14	-.11	.02	.07	-.16	.10	.16	.08	.21	.14	.12	.20	.01	-.08	-.10	-		
[illegible] total score	.05	-.15	.03	.08	-.18	.04	.11	.03	-.04	-.28	.31	.13	.17	.03	-.13	-.23	.60	-	
Staff rating - self concepts	.05	.14	-.40	.12	-.05	-.11	.37	-.54	.05	-.21	.14	.20	-.03	-.09	.02	-.27	.16	.13	-

Table 2

	Factor 1	Factor 2
Sitting/standing - yard	.76	0.0
Peer interaction - yard	.74	0.0
Wandering - yard	-.70	0.0
Neutral often - yard	-.67	0.0
Content often - yard	.65	0.0
Monitoring - yard	-.56	0.0
Peer interaction - work	.28	.79
Content often - work	0.0	.77
Neutral often - work	-.26	-.76
On task - work	0.0	-.66
Dancing - yard	0.0	.27
Self-verbalizing - yard	-.39	-.26
Bored often - work	0.0	0.0
Self-verbalizing - work	-.41	0.0

*Loadings less than 0.25 have been replaced by zero

Table 3

	Work performance	Staff-relations; disciplinary action	Problem reporting (work,home)	Peer relations	Romantic involvements	Parent-child relations	Outside recre. life	Self-esteem
Elite	High; consistently good	Low; no conflict	Low	Popular, enduring; low conflict	High; positive, enduring	Good, low conflict; accepting of dependency	Rich; content; involved in organ. programs for handi.	Positive fulfillm of duty reinforcing
Socialites	Highly variable; inconsistent	Moderate; variable; minor problems	High	Popular; transient; high turnover rate; moderate conflict	High; short-term and transient	Mild conflict; ambivalent toward dependency	Moderate discontent; some family & or organizational involve.	Inaccura ill-defi unstable extensi self-aggrandi ment, fantasy
Loners	High; consistently good	Low; no conflict	Low	Few; stable & enduring; fringes of other relationships	Low	Low conflict	Content; family involvements & special hobbies, interests	Secure, accurate balanced self-app sal; special abilitie reinforc
Non-conformers	Least reliable; most unproductive	High; problematic	High	Least popular; poor relationships; high conflict	Low	High conflict; resistant toward dependency	Low; lacking eventfulness	Low Dissatis fied

Table 4

Mean Self-Concept Scores For Each Group

	PH	C	Staff
High work - High social	64.29	76.56	35.29
High work - low social	65.83	76.44	34.56
Low work - high social	64.33	74.32	34.17
Low work - low social	59.31	73.84	32.08

Table 5

Proportion of Category References

	Activity/ possessions	Social conformity	Work-related comments	Personal attributes	Hetero-sexual comments	Family & friends	Dependency comments	Unclear-omissions
High work-high social	.21	.25	.15	.12	.04	.06	.05	.12
High work-low social	.27	.20	.09	.11	.14	.10	.06	.04
Low work-high social	.22	.27	.07	.12	.20	.04	.05	.02
Low work-low social	.21	.17	.17	.13	.07	.10	.07	.07
Mean	.23	.22	.13	.12	.11	.08	.06	.07